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Beyond Tolerance and Hospitality: Muslims as Strangers and Minor Subjects in Hindu Nationalist and Indian Nationalist Discourse

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> One will not say that the parts of one and the same natural, organic, and living ensemble *live together.*
>
> Jacques Derrida, "Avowing—The Impossible"

In "Avowing—The Impossible: 'Returns,' Repentance, and Reconciliation," Jacques Derrida offers a profound meditation on "how to live together."[1] He begins by acknowledging how these familiar, everyday words—*comment vivre ensemble*—have become strange and enigmatic for him; thus much of the essay is devoted to reflecting on the multiple connotations of this phrase before he addresses the question of *how* to live together. "Living together," Derrida points out, encompasses many heterogeneous connotations, ranging from the worst to the best, from notions of the last resort to the idea of living together in peace and in accord. In its French idiom, the phrase "how to live together" enjoins us: "live together," one *must* live together "given that living is always 'living together'" ("Avowing," 4). However, Derrida brings out many nuances and fine distinctions in this phrase by pointing out that the "must [*il faut*]" can be accented in at least two ways. On the one hand, the phrase, "*il faut bien vivre ensemble*" (one must *well* live together) reminds us of what remains an unavoidable necessity—one must live together somehow, in any fashion, even if it is badly, in hatred or in conflict, for how can one live otherwise? For example, Israelis and Palestinians, Indians and Pakistanis, simply must coexist and cohabitate in the same space and time; they don't really have a choice. But even, in this negative interpretation of the "must well live together," the two partners accept the notion of a shared higher interest—after all, "it is better to live than to

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die," so one may as well live together even if it is a resigned, armed, and tenuous coexistence that is contingent on an institutional jurisprudence, a contract, or sheer fear of mutual destruction. On the other hand, this injunction, "must well [*il faut bien*]," can also be otherwise modulated—one must live together *well*—gesturing toward a mode of coexistence that is of trust, concord, and "good faith." For Derrida, "the best of the 'living together' is often associated with peace . . . a perpetual peace or a messianic peace, whose promise belongs to the very concept of peace and suffices to distinguish it from armistice, from cease-fire, or even from any 'peace process.'" Thus Palestinians and Israelis will truly live together only when peace "comes into bodies and souls," when people agree to coexist in accord with one another. This peace or "ethics of 'living together'" does not have to entail a rupture with the law, but it cannot be limited to the contract guaranteed by the law or any sort of state apparatus ("Avowing," 10, 14, 16). In fact, it must exceed the uneasy tolerance of the political contract. But *how* does one live well together?[2]

Key to Derrida's vision of living well together are the related concepts of the *ensemble* and the *étranger*. Attending to the gap between the use of "ensemble" as a noun that connotes a whole, a gathering, a totality, and the use of "ensemble" as an adverb—for example in the expression *vivre ensemble* (living together)—Derrida maintains that the authority or closure of the ensemble (as a whole) will always be the first threat to all living together. Hence, the adverb "ensemble" (together) must always exceed, contest, and dislocate the authority of "ensemble" as a noun with its inflections of a whole or a coherent system, whether it is the whole of a biological or genetic organism, or the cohesiveness of a social entity, such as an ethnic group or a nation, that constitutes itself with this organic metaphor. Living together can neither be reducible to "organic symbiosis" (life according to nature, birth, or soil) nor to the juridico-political contract ("life according to convention, contract, or institution") ("Avowing," 16). Hence, one cannot claim that parts of the same ensemble live well together. To live together well, we must be able to interrogate all statutory conventions, all totalizations, and the folding upon itself of any organism or any social body (family, ethnic group, nation) that has been given to us by blood, birth, or belonging. In short, we must be able to think beyond the totality of any ensemble; moreover, we must ask, how do we relate to those who have been excluded from our (various) ensembles—those who have been designated as strangers, foreigners, and enemies?

This essay argues for the critical relevance of Derrida's work for examining the production of Muslims as strangers within the ensemble of the Indian nation, and for thinking about the living together of Hindus and Muslims / Indians and Pakistanis. By reading a representative Hindu nationalist text, V. D. Savarkar's *Hindutva* (1923) in conjunction with an emblematic secular nationalist text, Jawaharlal Nehru's magnum opus *The Discovery of India* (1946), I attend to some of the shared ground between Hindu nationalism and secular nationalism, especially when it comes to affirming the autochthony—and hence the prior claim—of Hindus on the nation-space of India. Both texts were written in colonial prisons (about twenty years apart from each other) and both offer a meditation

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on the nation as an ensemble and the nation-space as home. In particular, I examine the ways in which Hindus are set up as the organic, original nationals in both Savarkar and Nehru, while Muslims are positioned as enduring strangers (Savarkar) or at best as minor subjects of the nation (Nehru). At the same time, I also emphasize some of the key differences between the two texts: If in Savarkar, the Muslim remains a stranger by virtue of his extraneous religious affiliations, in Nehru, the Muslim outsider is no longer a stranger because he is eventually absorbed into the ensemble of the Indian nation. Moreover, there are vast differences in their visions of India and their approaches to the (problematic) figure of the Muslim: Whereas Savarkar advocates conversion or the return of Muslims to the Hindu fold, Nehru advocates tolerance and diversity as ideals for the nation—however, tolerance is almost always understood as Hindu tolerance of Muslims.

I argue that any effort at thinking about possibilities of peaceful coexistence between Hindus and Muslims calls for a fundamental rethinking of notions of autochthony and origins that establish upper-caste Hindus as the core national subjects, as well as of the liminal place of Muslims, not just in the more blatant fascist rhetoric of the Hindu Right but also in the more "tolerant" discourses of Indian nationalism, secularism, and citizenship. In the final section, I go on to examine the implications of Derrida's treatises on hospitality for thinking the living together of Hindus and Muslims in India. While acknowledging the immense importance of Derrida's injunctions to interrogate our notions of being "at home" and his call for an unconditional hospitality to the stranger (*étranger*), I also draw attention to some of the risks of absolute hospitality in naturalizing the very categories of host and stranger that it sets out to dismantle. I suggest that if there is to be a living well together, it cannot rely on the ethics of hospitality alone. The stranger must be able to appropriate his or her dwelling-place as a home.

On the Stranger/Foreigner

The concept of the stranger (*étranger*) has been at the core of Derrida's ethical philosophy and attests to the influence of Levinasian ethics on Derrida's thinking. In "Avowing—The Impossible," Derrida underscores the importance of the stranger for any living together when he invokes Levinas's lesson on how one should relate to the stranger. Levinas suggests that the respect given to the stranger is equivalent to the sanctity accorded to God; therefore, "the image of God is better honored in the right given to the stranger than in symbols" ("Avowing," 20). In the spirit of this Levinasian dictum, Derrida proposes that one only lives together well with and as a stranger at home, in all the varied senses of home, including the self, the family, the neighborhood, the religious or ethnic community, and the nation-state. To unpack the implications of this statement, we must begin by addressing the category of the stranger in Derrida's thought and its relevance for understanding the anomalous position of Muslims in India.

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Derrida writes in French—I read him in English. As he reminds us, the question of hospitality is one of translation; hence, I begin with a meditation on translation. Like the Greek word *xenos*, the French word *étranger* encapsulates both stranger *and* foreigner in English and therefore at once brings out and masks the relationship between these concepts. Although these are indissociable concepts, I suggest they must first be distinguished so as to see the overlaps between them. Because Derrida draws on Emile Benveniste's scholarly treatise, *Indo-European Language and Society* (*Le Vocabulaire des institutions Indo-Européennes*) for his work on hospitality, it is useful to begin with Benveniste's attempt to define *étranger*: "The stranger is 'he who *comes from outside*,' Lat. *advena*, or simply, 'he who is outside the limits of the community,' Lat. *peregrines*" (my emphasis).[3] The English translation of Benveniste's French text deploys "stranger" for *étranger*, but Benveniste's definition (especially the first part of his formulation) seems more closely associated with the English word "foreigner" in its emphasis on an outside space. Whereas a foreigner is clearly someone who comes from abroad—an elsewhere, an outside—the notion of the stranger in modern English allows for more ambivalence and the blurring of categories, such as those between self and other, inside and outside. In modern English (unlike in middle English), the stranger is a newcomer, an unknown and unfamiliar person, but not necessarily one who belongs to another space—another city, locality, or above all, another nation-state—which is typically how we understand "foreigner" today, given the term's inevitable association with citizenship in modernity.[4]

When Derrida uses the French term *étranger*, he draws on both senses of the concept—stranger and foreigner—sometimes moving between the two and at other times privileging one connotation over the other, thus posing a dilemma for those who translate his work into English. This is especially evident in his late work on hospitality where he offers an extended meditation on how one should relate to the stranger/foreigner.[5] A close reading of Derrida's writing on hospitality reveals a slippage in his use of *étranger*—between the notions of foreigner and stranger—precisely because they are so intertwined in French. For instance when, in "The Foreigner Question," he asks: "What does foreigner [*étranger*] mean? Who is foreign? . . . What is meant by 'going abroad,' coming from abroad?" clearly the context justifies the translator's use of "foreigner" (the spatial connotation of *étranger* here veers closer to the English foreigner).[6] For the most part, he proceeds with the assumption that an *étranger* is one who comes from an outside space, a beyond. This is very evident when he writes in "Hostipitality": "*In general it is the birthplace which will always have underpinned the definition of the stranger [étranger] (the stranger as non-autochthonous, non-indigenous . . .). The stranger is first of all he who is born elsewhere*."[7]

However, earlier in the same essay, Derrida also draws on the connotation of *étranger* as the strange or unfamiliar person when he suggests that "hospitality is also an intentional experience that proceeds beyond knowledge toward the other as absolute stranger [*étranger*], *as unknown*, where I know that I know nothing of him. . . . Hospitality is owed

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to the other as stranger" (8). Similarly, in "Avowing—the Impossible," Derrida speaks of the necessity for a hospitality to the "wholly other who exceeds the statutory convention" ("Avowing," 16). Clearly, the term *étranger* in the above contexts is being used to indicate an other "whose foreignness cannot be restricted to foreignness in relation to language, family or citizenship," but one who is the "wholly other, the absolute unforeseeable [*inanticipable*] stranger."[8] Elsewhere in his work, Derrida uses *étranger* to underscore the importance of respecting the alterity of the other in relation to the self, where every other is understood to be wholly other [*tout autre est tout autre*]. Even this very preliminary examination of Derrida's repeated use of the word *étranger* makes it evident that he relies on the dual connotations of *étranger* as both the unknown person (the stranger) and the one who comes from outside (the foreigner). To my mind, the French word *étranger* simultaneously accentuates and obscures the overlap between the categories of stranger and foreigner—that have to do with an affiliation with an outside—which I seek to illuminate and make visible in this essay.

If the question of how one relates to the stranger or foreigner is central to any ethics of living well together, as Derrida proposes, then it is important to differentiate between these two concepts precisely in order to see how they merge and overlap. English is useful here precisely because it has two words—stranger and foreigner—for *étranger*. Zygmunt Bauman's work on the stranger as the "third element"—the hybrid or the monster—is very helpful in allowing us to distinguish the concept of the stranger from the foreigner, as well as to see the intersections between the two. Bauman differentiates between two kinds of unfamiliars: The first are "those who reside in practically remote (that is rarely visited) lands" and denote the limits of familiar territory (i.e., foreigners). Territorial and functional means of separation are used to maintain the unfamiliarity of these (first) kinds of unfamiliars, and exchange with them is outside the everyday web of interactions.[9] The second type of unfamiliars are the strangers:

> Territorial and functional separation cease to suffice once the mere unfamiliar turns to be the stranger, aptly described by Simmel as "the man who comes today and stays tomorrow." The stranger is, indeed, *someone who refuses to stay in the "far away" land or go away* and hence a priori defies the easy expedient of spatial or temporal segregation. The stranger comes into the life-world and settles here. . . . *He made his way into the life-world uninvited*, thereby casting me on the receiving side of his initiative.[10]

A stranger is one who may share your space—who may live in proximity to you—but at the same time is perceived as an *unfamiliar, undecidable* person. The unforgivable sin of "late entry"—and the fact that the moment of entry can be determined or pinpointed—enables the production of the stranger as nonnative, non-autochthonous because he did not belong "originally," from the very beginning, since antiquity. Accordingly, the stranger is an interstitial figure who destabilizes the spatial ordering of the world into friends and

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enemies. He introduces into "the inner circle of proximity the kind of difference and otherness" that is typically endured and tolerated at a distance.[11] Of course, strangeness and the traits associated with the stranger are not natural; the construction of the stranger as stranger is a continuous process that takes place in everyday life through a nexus of social practices and institutional exclusions that must be reiterated continually. In this way, the stranger is positioned as someone who is other than one's own, who is *outside* one's ensemble, even if he or she does not reside in an outside space or territory (typically the nation-state in modernity). He or she represents an incongruous fusion of nearness and distance, inside and outside.[12]

Thus, both foreigner and stranger have in common the notion of an outside, but, while the association with an outside is very apparent in the instance of foreigner in modern English usage, it is not as evident in the case of the stranger.[13] Only by differentiating between the two can we see how they run together. I argue that the Derridean concept of the *étranger*—when understood as stranger—can be immensely useful for reflecting on the ambivalent place of minority religious and ethnic communities who *are located* within the ensemble of the imagined nation, yet are simultaneously rendered strange and undecidable precisely *because they are haunted by their presumed links to an outside*. In the next section, I reflect on the ways in which Hindu nationalist discourse positions religious minorities as strangers by constructing their particular beliefs and traditions as strange *and extraneous* to the nation. I examine an iconic text of Hindu nationalism, V. D. Savarkar's *Hindutva*, to show how Indian Muslims, in particular, are rendered as non-autochthonous strangers not because they are born elsewhere or because they came from an "outside," but because they follow religious traditions that emerged elsewhere. Savarkar's text illustrates how our notions of being "at home" and in place—especially when they rest on possessiveness and ownership of the home—can often incite hostility and hatred toward those designated as strangers.

Hindu Nationalism and the Figure of the Muslim

The accelerated ascendance of the Hindu Right, especially since the late 1980s, presents one of the central conundrums of contemporary Indian history and politics. Hindu nationalism's attempts to racialize and militarize Hindus and to Hinduize India has been a matter of much concern for those who believe in the living together of Hindus and Muslims, Indians and Pakistanis.[14] The vision of a homogenous Hindu *rashtra* (nation) that is in accord with upper-caste Hindu beliefs and practices is at the core of the Hindu Right's agenda. Hindu nationalists claim that "Hindus"—a term that elides the many differences of belief, practice, caste, region, and class among the majority community—are the original inhabitants and hence the rightful owners of India, the true guardians of its heritage and its culture. Correspondingly, the construction of insiders and outsiders, natives and

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aliens, citizens and foreigners, has been central to the Hindu nationalist program. Minority religious communities have been positioned as strangers and outsiders who must either be evicted or assimilated into the fold of the dominant Hindu culture. Although the Hindu Right has targeted all minorities in its goal of making India a Hindu nation, Indian Muslims have merited a special place in its hostile and virulent agenda.

Present-day Muslims are viewed as descendants of cruel and aggressive medieval Muslim rulers who invaded India, destroyed Hindu temples, and forcibly converted many Hindus at the point of the sword. According to this narrative, Hindus have been waging an enduring struggle for liberation against foreign rule for nearly a thousand years, ever since Muslim rulers established their dominance over a large section of Northern India. As Gyanendra Pandey observes, "Hindu 'history' reduces all of India's past to a twofold statement: first the glory of pre-Muslim India; and second the unceasing troubles that have come to reign ever since the Muslims came to the subcontinent. . . . It is a history of perpetual Hindu-Muslim conflict, Muslim aggression and Hindu resistance, Good versus Evil, the Pure versus the Impure."[15] This widely prevalent view reduces the complex history of Muslims—and Islam—in India to a catalogue of barbaric conquests, cruelty, repeated invasions, and the desecration of temples. Muslims are thus viewed as eternal outsiders in much contemporary Hindu nationalist discourse, who must either be expunged from the body of the nation, or at best folded into the internal law of the primordial Hindu hosts.[16]

The notion of *Hindutva* (literally "Hinduness") encapsulates the majoritarian and fascist manifesto of the Sangh Parivar, the "family" of right-wing political, cultural, and religious organizations that make up the Hindu Right, led by the Hindu supremacist organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or the RSS (the National Volunteers Corps founded in 1925). The word *Hindutva*—a term that connotes a program of Hindu supremacy—is a neologism that was proposed by V. D. Savarkar, an influential icon of the modern Hindu nationalist movement. Savarkar is considered to be the chief inspiration for the Hindu Right's belief that India is the exclusive terrain of Hindus. In his 1923 book *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* Savarkar took on the task of defining the essence of a Hindu by laying out who belongs to the Hindu fold and who must be excluded.[17] Savarkar's work is important for its attempt to racialize and nationalize the category "Hindu" and to establish the intrinsic association of Hindus with the territory of "India." Like many nationalists, Savarkar assumes the fictive continuity of a territorially bound, singular national entity—India or Hindustan—and retrospectively projects it onto the ancient past in an effort to assert majority Hindus as the organic nationals. In fact, the entire exercise of *Hindutva* is devoted to establishing the prior claim of Hindus on colonial India and to excluding Muslims from the ensemble of the nation by designating them as strangers and outsiders.

Savarkar begins his treatise by defining his neologism *Hindutva* and by differentiating it from the "cognate term" Hinduism, which he suggests is only a derivative of *Hindutva*.

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> Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism. By an "ism" it is generally meant a theory or a code more or less based on spiritual or religious dogma or system. But when we attempt to investigate into the essential significance of Hindutva we do not primarily—and certainly not mainly—concern ourselves with any particular theocratic or religious dogma or creed. Had not linguistic usage stood in our way, then "Hinduness" would have certainly been a better word than Hinduism as a near parallel to Hindutva. Hindutva replaces all the departments of thought and activity of the whole being of our *Hindu race.* (3–4)

Most of the book is concerned with outlining Hindutva, or the essence of being a Hindu, but in order to appreciate what constitutes Hindutva, Savarkar proposes that one must first understand who or what a "Hindu" is. He goes to great lengths to establish the antiquity of the word *Hindu*, its organic connection with both the land and the people, and its indigenous origin. Like many other nationalists, he locates the origins of the modern "Hindu nation" in Vedic civilization because the Vedas are the "matrix deferred to by the founders and followers of most later strands of Hinduism."[18] Although he proceeds with the (then) widely held assumption that the Vedic Aryans migrated to the northern part of "India" (albeit with the caveat that oriental scholarship doesn't know enough about their original home) and acknowledges the likely presence of already existing "thinly scattered *native* tribes," yet, he also sets up the Aryans as "a people destined to lay the foundation of a great and enduring civilization," who succeeded in developing a "*sense of nationality*" and giving it a "local habitation and a name"—namely Sindhu or Hindu after the river Indus (8, 5, my emphasis).[19] His account of the Aryans is especially interesting because he uses the language of settler colonization and the civilizing mission to describe how they "reclaimed the vast waste and but very thinly populated lands" and "changed the whole face of the wild and unkemp[t] nature." These "intrepid Aryans made it [India] their home and lighted their first sacrificial fire on the banks of the Sindhu, the Indus," and from there "tribe after tribe of the Hindus issued forth from the land of their nursery" in order to conquer the rest of the land. What is noteworthy here is the slippage between the terms Aryan, Hindu, and Indian such that the Vedic Aryans come to constitute the essence and foundation of not just (modern) Hinduism, but also of the imagined Indian nation, which seeks to appropriate state power from the British. Thus Savarkar describes them as "Indians in their forward march" as they moved beyond the land surrounding the Indus. "This strong and vigorous *race*" came to call themselves "Sindhus" and the land as "Sapta Sindhu," while the neighboring Persians came to term them "Hindus"—in a variant of the Sanskrit word Sindhu. Savarkar insists on the autochthony of the term *Hindu* despite its allegedly foreign provenance: "Down to this day the whole world knows us as 'Hindus' and our land as 'Hindusthan' as if in fulfillment of the wishes of our Vedic fathers who were the first to make that choice" (4–15, my emphasis).

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As Etienne Balibar tells us, "The name symbolically attached to national existence, *to a territory that remains the same in whole or in part*, or which was that of a neighboring territory (thus 'Germany,' 'Russia,' 'Serbia,'), often contributes to allowing the nation to forge a continuous identity by means of a set of 'national' stories in which it plays a prevalent imaginary role."[20] The notion of "India" as a spatially bound geographical and historical entity only emerged contingently in the last decades of the nineteenth century, in early popular geohistorical nationalist writing from colonial north India, as Manu Goswami has demonstrated.[21] Significantly, the territorial boundaries of colonial India came to constitute the "approximate spatial scale" of the imagined nation in these early nationalist accounts; this imaginative appropriation of colonial territory was in turn attended by the concomitant spatial expansion of the terms—Bharat, Hindustan, or Aryavarta—to effect a nationalization of colonial space.[22] Clearly, "India," "Hindustan," or "Bharat" never was a nation-state in the modern sense of the word during the time of the Vedic Aryans, but like all nationalists, Savarkar insists on the antiquity and the enduring existence of the nation—and its spatially bound territory—by establishing the continuity of the name that is associated with it. It is no coincidence that he chooses "Hindustan" over other variants such as "Bharat," "India," or even "Aryavarta" as the "cradle name" of the nation. While "Aryavarta"—the land of the Aryans—is not expansive enough to encompass the territory of colonial India "from the Indus to the seas," even the ancient name "Bharat" that was affirmed in many popular nineteenth-century nationalist histories is eschewed for "Hindustan"—land of the Hindus—in an effort to claim Vedic Aryans as the founding fathers of the nation, and to validate present-day Hindus as their descendants, the primordial heirs of the nation (14). In Savarkar's account, religious community and territory are fused organically by giving them a version of the same name—Hindu, Hindustan—in order to constitute the nation as an organic ensemble and to assert an isomorphism between people, culture, and territory.

If the migrant Aryans are conjured as fearless and adventurous *settlers* and the founders of the nation, the entry of Muslim rulers from the northwest of the subcontinent many centuries later is described in sharp contrast as a cataclysmic foreign "invasion" that ruptured the peace of the land and its people. Savarkar describes the crossing of Mohammad [Mahmud] of Ghazni across the river Indus as a "dire day" when the "conflict of life and death began" in Sindhusthan. He encapsulates the entire history of medieval north India in a few cursory pages in which his goal is to establish how "India alone had to face Arabs, Persians, Pathans, Baluchis, Tartars, Turks, Moguls—a veritable human Sahara whirling and columning up bodily in a furious world storm." The metaphor of a stormy swirling Sahara is used to describe and lump together different Muslim ethnicities and dynasties as "foreign invaders." What is more, the desert-like qualities of the Sahara are implicitly contrasted with the fertile and life-giving qualities of the river Indus. In many ways, Savarkar reiterates the commonly held colonialist and nationalist view of all Muslim history as invader history: "Day after day, decade after decade, century after century, the ghastly

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conflict continued and India single-handed kept up the fight morally and militarily." The only qualifier in this sweeping account of different historical figures and moments is when he pauses to acknowledge the Mughal ruler Akbar's ascent to the throne and the birth of his son as a "moral victory" for India (presumably because Akbar married a Rajput princess). At the same time, the "Muslim invasion" of the subcontinent is also seen to have a somewhat beneficial (and unintended) side effect because it worked to unite the entire country into an "indivisible whole" or a "single Being"—recalling Derrida's notion of the ensemble as a totality or a homogenous community—against a monolithic alien oppressor (42–45). In this manner, people belonging to various sects, denominations, castes, and language groups are said to have suffered as "Hindus" and to have emerged victorious against the paradigmatic alien Muslim foe.

Much of the remainder of Savarkar's book is devoted to defining the essential attributes of a "Hindu" (Hindutva), to circumscribing the limits of the posited Hindu "nation," and to designating the figure of the Muslim as a stranger whose loyalties are always suspect *so long as he remains a Muslim*. Accordingly, Savarkar outlines three fundamental aspects of Hindutva: (1) geography or a common territory, (2) a common "race-jati," and (3) a common civilization (*Sanskriti*). At every point of this tripartite formulation, Savarkar pauses to explain why the Muslim cannot be included within the Hindu fold, even if he may be considered a *Bhartiya* or *Hindi* (he uses these terms interchangeably with Indian). He begins by contending that to be a Hindu one must claim this land "as his motherland" and as the land of his patriarchs: "Hindusthan meaning the land of Hindus, the first essential of Hindutva must necessarily be this geographical one." This affiliation with the territory of (colonial) India is first and foremost what makes Hindus a nation. However, geographical ties to the imagined nation-space in themselves are not enough to constitute the essence of a Hindu because "we would be straining the usage of words too much—we fear to the point of breaking—if we call a Mohammedan a Hindu because of his being a resident of India" (82–83). Clearly, dwelling or residence is not enough to claim to be "at home" in a nation.

Savarkar goes on to consider shared descent or what he terms "the bonds of a common blood" between Hindus—"all Hindus claim to have in their veins the blood of the *mighty race* incorporated with and descended from the Vedic fathers, the Sindhus." Hence Hindus are not only a nation, but also a "race-jati," one which has been unified by means of intermarriages between the various castes (84–85).[23] Savarkar relies on biological notions of race to establish Hindus as a homogeneous community. He explains his use of the hyphenated term "race-jati" thus: "The word jati derived from the root Jan[,] to produce, means a brotherhood, *a race determined by a common origin*, possessing a common blood" (84–85, my emphasis). *Jati* is a Sanskrit term derived from the root *jan*, which has the twin meanings of birth and species; significantly, the word *jati* is most often used to describe the phenomenon of caste in India—as it pertains to endogamous descent groups—hence it is noteworthy that Savarkar should use the term *jati* as a translation of the concept of

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race. Both racism and casteism are deeply harmful forms of social exclusion that justify themselves precisely on principles of biological descent.[24] Thus, it is not inconsequential that Savarkar should amalgamate what are, to his mind, the positively imbued categories of race and caste. The hyphenated term "race-jati" allows him to bring together the categories of race and caste and to constitute Hindus as a bounded organic whole, based on the (fictive) notion of common descent.

Indeed, throughout Savarkar's account of "Hindus" as the organic nationals of the Indian nation, we see a merging of the terms of "race," "jati," and "religion." In his study of the Semites, "an uncannily dangerous group . . . at the internal and external borders of the Christian West," Gil Anidjar has shown how Jews and Arabs similarly functioned at once as race and religion—"virtually the selfsame Semites"—in the work of nineteenth-century Orientalists such that what was said about Jews could equally be said about Arabs.[25] He uses the example of the Semites—who, like the Aryans, were "a concrete figment of the Western imagination"—to show how the categories of race and religion are "discursively co-constitutive, that they operate in concert (regardless of intentionality), particularly where one appears to be irrelevant to the other." Accordingly, Anidjar concurs with William Hart, who suggests that the racial distinctions that are posited between Aryans and Semites are intrinsically connected to religious divisions between Christians and Jews, and Christians and Muslims. The transient, ephemeral figure of the Semite thus emerged from the erasure of a distinction between Jew and Arab, religion and race. Despite (and against) the institutionalized disciplinary divisions that regulate the study of race as distinct from religion, Anidjar calls for a recognition that religion and race are "contemporary, indeed coextensive and, moreover, co-concealing categories, whereby religion often serves as a "mask for race."[26]

These multiple discursive links between race and religion are evident in Savarkar's effort to racialize Hindus. Hindus are at once race, religion, and nationality in Savarkar and the intersection of these categories allows him to constitute Hindus as an indivisible whole—an ensemble in the Derridean sense. Yet, the notion of Hindus as a race—descended from the Vedic fathers—is rendered radically unstable when he acknowledges that many Muslims are in fact local converts: "The story of their conversions, forcible in millions of cases, is too recent to make them forget, even if they like to do so, that they inherit *Hindu blood* in their veins."[27] Once again the figure of the Muslim troubles Savarkar's efforts to establish a closed off and clearly demarcated Hindu whole; still, he must ask, can we afford to "recognize these Mohammedans as Hindus?" Muslims, he claims, must be positioned outside the Hindu fold (even though "their original Hindu blood" may be "almost unaffected by an alien adulteration") because they do not "own" a common culture and civilization—including most importantly a shared religion—with Hindus (91–92).

It is this third principle of Hindutva that allows Savarkar to place the Muslim firmly outside the ensemble of the imagined Hindu—read Indian—nation. Drawing on the na-

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ture/culture opposition to claim that civilization is the "secondary creation of man" from "matter," Savarkar argues that Hindu civilization emerges organically as a secondary product of the territory—Hindustan (here understood as nature/matter).[28] What makes Hindus a "cultural unit" or an ensemble is not only the fact that they are a common nation (a people tied to a territory) or a common race (based on shared descent from the Vedic fathers), but "as a consequence of being both," they also have a common *Sanskriti* (culture or civilization) (99). Interestingly, he strives to make the term "Hindu" more capacious in order to include within its conceptual realm all religious traditions that arose *within* the territory of colonial India such as Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and the Arya Samaj. The followers of these "heterodox" or "minority" traditions must be embraced within the fold of Hindutva since they are valuable allies in Savarkar's project of a Hindu nation in the making. Accordingly, he suggests that either the term Hinduism should be restored to its "proper" usage in order to include all religions that emerged in India—"the land of the Saptasindhus or in the other unrecorded communities in other parts of India in the Vedic period"—or failing that, it should be dropped altogether. The "generic term Hindu Dharma" must be used to indicate all these (autochthonous) "Dharmas as a *whole*," while more specific terms may be used to indicate particular religious traditions (107). Noticeably, Islam and Christianity remain extraneous to Savarkar's expanded definition of "Hindu Dharma" because they did not emerge in the territory of the imagined nation.

Accordingly, Christians and Muslims cannot be recognized as "Hindus" even in this expanded sense; they have "ceased to own Hindu civilization" by adopting a different religion, which is viewed as the ultimate betrayal by Savarkar and his descendants in the Hindu Right. The argument is that they feel they belong to a cultural unit that is "altogether different from the Hindu one." Savarkar is willing to concede the possibility of a shared Hindu-Muslim culture such that certain Muslim communities—such as "patriotic" Bohras or Khojas—may share cultural heroes and customs with Hindus, yet even these Muslims cannot be included within the Hindu ensemble *because they follow religions that originated outside of "India."* Thus he proclaims: "For though Hindusthan to them is Fatherland as to any other Hindu yet it is not to them a Holyland too. *Their holyland is far off in Arabia or Palestine*. Their mythology and Godmen, ideas and heroes, *are not the children of this soil*. Consequently their names and their outlook *smacks of a foreign origin*. Their love is divided" (100–101, 113, my emphasis). Herein lies the rub. Savarkar's assertion that Muslims do not quite belong to the Indian nation exemplifies Derrida and Bauman's conception of the stranger as someone who is outside the limits of one's ensemble, an interstitial figure who destabilizes the spatial ordering of the world into friends and enemies. Their affiliation with the nation—Hindustan—is always suspect because they believe in a religious tradition that has been construed as nonnative by relying on the fictive continuity of a territorially bound national entity. Concomitantly, Savarkar's belief that Hindus constitute the organic core of the nation rests not so much on the more typical argument that they are the original inhabitants of the claimed territory—

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since he is cognizant of the prevalent Aryan migration theory—but rather upon the autochthony of the diverse religious traditions that he terms "Hindu." India is the land of their revelation: "The system or set of religions which we call Hindu *dharma*—Vaidik and Non-Vaidik—is as truly the offspring of this soil as the men whose thoughts they are or who 'saw' the Truth revealed in them" (110, my emphasis).[29] Territorial origin—itself defined ironically by the nationalization and appropriation of *colonial* space—is used by Savarkar to posit Hindus as the essence of the nation and simultaneously to exclude Muslims and Christians from the ensemble of the nation, or at least to render them strange and undecidable.

Savarkar projects the (modern and colonial) notion of India as a spatially bound, unified entity onto the Vedic past and concomitantly posits a territorial and autochthonous conception of nationhood that affirms a hierarchy of identities—with Hindus firmly established as the core nationals—based on an assumed equivalence between land, culture, and identity. He puts forward a vision of living together that is limited precisely by blood, soil, birth, descent, and belonging in order to set up Hindus as a closed-off ensemble, and eventually to establish India as the land of the Hindus. The limit case in *Hindutva* is always provided by the anomalous figure of the Muslim who must remain extraneous to this vision of a Hindu nation. Although Savarkar also excludes Christians as followers of an alien religion, his examples always return to Muslims as the sites of excess and strangeness, who must be kept out of the Hindu whole. In Savarkar's vision of India as a Hindu nation, Muslims may be considered denizens of India—*Bhartiyas* or *Hindis*—but they cannot claim to be owners or guardians of the nation. Muslims as Muslims cannot be accommodated within Savarkar's fascist project of a Hindu nation in the making. The only way for them to be reabsorbed into the fold is to convert to one of the ostensibly indigenous traditions.[30] Given the prior claim of Hindus on the nation, it is clear that Muslims can only be considered guests or visitors who are there at the largesse of Hindus. Hence they will, at best, be subordinate citizens of a free India.

Although Savarkar's notion of Hindutva emerged in the context of colonial exploitation and anticolonial resistance, there is no escaping the troubling fascism of this book in its effort to draw boundaries and to position the Muslim as a stranger or an internal enemy whose allegiances are suspect. Savarkar's notion that India is the land of Hindus and his vision of a homogenous Hindu nation have been appropriated by the postindependence Hindu nationalist movement in India. Savarkar provides a name—Hindutva—and a manifesto for this movement. (Savarkar himself was part of the Hindu Mahasabha, the Hindu Convention, an organization with close ties to the RSS, and went on to become its leader.) Much subsequent Hindu nationalist discourse positions the Muslim as an outsider and asserts that Hindus are the original and primordial denizens of India. For example, M. S. Golwalkar, the second chief or *sarsanghchalak* of the RSS, asserted, "Undoubtedly . . . we—Hindus—have been in undisputed and undisturbed possession of this land for over eight or even ten thousand years before the land was invaded by any *foreign*

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race."[31] The language of possession, ownership, and virile mastery is the hallmark of much of this discourse with Hindus established as the autochthons—the representative or core nationals—and Muslims as the perpetual outsiders whose loyalties are always suspect.

More sophisticated voices, following Savarkar's precedent, are willing to concede the possibility of Aryan migration, yet they persist in constituting the Muslim as an unknown, undecidable figure by drawing an explicit contrast between Muslims and the Vedic Aryans. Thus, Shrikant Talageri, a present-day Hindu nationalist writer, argues, "Even if it is assumed that a group of people, called 'Aryans,' invaded, or immigrated into India, . . . *they have left no trace, if ever there was any, of any link, much less the consciousness of any link, much less any loyalties associated with such a link, to any place outside India*."[32] It is this idea of a trace—a residue—of a link to the "outside" that haunts the figure of the Muslim in Hindu nationalist discourse and allows us to see the shared conceptual ground between the categories of foreigner and stranger. A stranger (unlike a foreigner) may live in proximity to us, but the association with an elsewhere, a beyond, persists in shadowing him. Thus the Muslim may be considered a part of the totality of the Indian nation—he may even share "the same blood"—but his loyalties and allegiances are always open to question, especially since Partition and the creation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for India's Muslims.[33]

If the milder face of the Hindu Right endorses a program of cultural nationalism that upholds assimilation based on Savarkar's notion of Hindutva, more hostile voices support a racist program that makes it acceptable to kill the Muslim. One of the most widespread slogans that was used to mobilize Hindu mobs against Muslims during the Ayodhya agitation of the 1980s and 1990s was "*Babar ki aulad jao Pakistan ya kabristan* [children of Babar (the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India) go to Pakistan or the graveyard]." This horrific attitude was also amply demonstrated in the anti-Muslim pogrom that took place in Gujarat in 2002. The Hindu Right today may not use the term "race" to designate Hindus or Muslims (they speak in terms of Hindu culture/religion and of Hindutva as a "way of life"), but as Anidjar points out, "Religious distinctions, indeed religious identifications, hide the most persistent remnants of a history of racism" and "where religion has emerged, race has all but disappeared (that is to say that though visible, it has been concealed in its power and effects)."[34] In the Hindu nationalist narrative, the Muslim becomes the archetypal outsider, and indeed the enemy of the great Hindu nation.

Balibar is right when he notes that we are witnessing an increasing confusion of the historical and political concepts of the stranger and the enemy throughout the world—a tendency that is in fact inherent in the nation form. Balibar seems to think that this process represents a "new ambiguity" or blurring between these separate categories; however, as Benveniste reminds us, "The notions of enemy, stranger [foreigner], guest, which for us form three distinct entities—semantically and legally—in the [ancient] Indo-European languages show close connections."[35] As I have been arguing, these overlaps persist in modernity, as well, but to appreciate them, we must first be able to distinguish between

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these interrelated concepts. The structural links between the stranger and the enemy have become very visible in post-Partition India, especially since the rise to political power of the Hindu nationalist movement. Under these prevailing assumptions, India's over one hundred million Muslims are at best guests who live in the country on Hindu sufferance, or at worst the nemesis that must be expunged from the benign and tolerant Hindu nation.

Nehru's *Discovery of India*

Like Savarkar's *Hindutva*, *Discovery* was written in a colonial prison during the years 1942–46 when Nehru, along with several other Congress leaders, was incarcerated in Ahmadnagar Fort for passing the Quit India resolution against the British government. Part historical narrative, part memoir, and part prison diary, *Discovery* is a paradigmatic expression of the Indian nationalist imagination at the cusp of independence and sovereignty. As Aamir Mufti writes, "Nehru's *Discovery* is, famously, a narrative of the emergence of nationalism out of the great sweep of India's history and an account of the constancy, throughout this process of historical development, *of India's personality*."[36] Published a year before independence, *Discovery* is a colossal work that is at once historical, speculative, and literary in its attempt to imaginatively reconstruct "India's" past.[37] It also anticipates the postindependence Indian state and delineates what sort of shape it should take. In this section, I offer a reading of Nehru's epic narrative in order to trace how Hindus are once again established as the core or original nationals in *Discovery*, whereas Muslims emerge as belated nationals, and eventually as minor subjects of the nation. Yet, *Hindutva* and *Discovery* are also very different works not just in scope and complexity but also in their sensibility: Savarkar's *Hindutva* is fascist and exclusionary in its effort to oust Muslims, whereas Nehru's *Discovery* affirms tolerance and diversity as national ideals.

Much like Savarkar, Nehru assumes a fictive continuity between past and present and takes for granted an already existent bounded national entity—"India"—that he projects on to the classical past. By the time he was writing this book, the findings of the Indus Valley excavations had been widely publicized. The discovery by the archaeological expeditions in the 1920s of this highly sophisticated ancient civilization in colonial India undermined the widely prevalent colonialist and racialized account of blond, white-skinned European Aryans conquering and civilizing the primitive black-skinned natives of India.[38] In view of these findings, Nehru begins his historical account of India with the Indus Valley and suggests that "for all practical purposes" the people of this civilization may be considered "the indigenous inhabitants of India."[39] However, despite this acknowledgment of the (likely) prior existence of the Indus Valley Civilization, he too goes to some lengths to place Vedic culture at the origin of India.[40] This is very evident in the following

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passage from "The Coming of the Aryans" where he describes the emergence of Indian culture: "We might say that the first great cultural synthesis and fusion took place between the incoming Aryans and the Dravidians, who were probably the representatives of the Indus Valley Civilization. Out of this synthesis and fusion grew the *Indian races and the basic Indian culture*, which had distinctive elements of both" (73).[41] Synthesis and fusion are recurrent tropes in Nehru's biography of the nation: Here, they allow him to set up the Vedic Aryans along with the inhabitants of the Indus Valley as the originary people of India. Imbibing and reproducing Orientalist and colonialist forms of knowledge, Nehru racializes the terms Aryan and Dravidian—which had emerged from linguistics and philology—and sets them up as the first "races" of India. Furthermore, after providing a very brief account of the Rig Veda as possibly "the earliest book that humanity possesses," he asserts that "from these dim beginnings of long ago *flow out the rivers of Indian thought and philosophy*, of Indian life and culture and literature, ever widening and increasing in volume, and sometimes flooding the land with their rich deposits" (79–81, my emphasis). Vedic culture is taken to be not only the foundation of Hindu civilization, but the very basis of Indian civilization. Key to Nehru's effort of constituting Vedic civilization as originary—despite his acceptance of the common theory that the composers of the Vedic hymns migrated to India—is his assertion that the Indo-Aryans elaborated the Vedas "*in the soil of India*" (77). Because the Vedas are considered to be the founding texts by most later strands of Hinduism, it is particularly important for both Nehru and Savarkar to establish their autochthony—"India" as the land of Vedic composition and revelation—all the more so since they accept that the Vedic Aryans came from outside the territorial bounds of the nationalist imagination. This allows them to establish Hindus as the original—and hence representative—national subjects.

In *Discovery*, Nehru goes to great lengths to affirm the continuity of an essential Indian culture that has remained unchanged over the centuries despite the many "foreign" incursions. Consequently, he approvingly cites the archaeologist of the Indus Valley ruins, Sir John Marshall: "In the religion of the Indus people there is much, of course, that might be paralleled in other countries. . . . But, taken as a whole, their religion *is so characteristically Indian as hardly to be distinguished from still living Hinduism*" (71). Although Nehru is very careful to discredit any use of the term "Hindu" (in its present identification with a specific religious tradition) as interchangeable with "Indian," his account fails to avoid the pitfalls of a nativist conception of nationhood that takes territory or land as the natural ground for the constitution of organic cultural identities. Thus, like Savarkar, he posits a stratification of identities by emphasizing the autochthony of certain religiocultural traditions. All religiocultural traditions that originated in "India"—a territory roughly approximating the spatial scale of the colonial state—such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism (and later Sikhism) are viewed as somehow more authentically or essentially "Indian," whereas Islam and Christianity are external to his narrative of the becoming of the nation. Where Savarkar seeks to provide a more capacious understanding

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of the terms Hindu, Hinduism, and *Hindu dharma*, Nehru proposes the (related) concept of *Arya dharma* to encapsulate all faiths—Vedic and non-Vedic—that emerged in "India." Thus, he asserts, "Buddhism and Jainism were certainly not Hinduism. . . . Yet they arose in India and were integral parts of Indian life, culture and philosophy. A Buddhist or a Jain in India is *a hundred percent product of Indian thought and culture*, yet neither is Hindu by faith" (75). In contrast, we are told, a Muslim or a Christian "could, and often did . . . *become an Indian* without changing his religion" by adapting himself to the "Indian way of life and culture." The implication is clear—Muslims and Christians are—or were not—a priori Indians. "Indian" in Nehru is akin to Savarkar's expanded sense of "Hindu," where both stand in for a basic or essential national culture. And, although Nehru is willing to admit that this originary "Indian" culture was "greatly influenced by the impact of Islam," he also insists that "it remained basically and distinctively Indian." Thus, "each incursion of foreign elements was a challenge to this culture, but it was met successfully by a new synthesis and a process of absorption. This was also a process of rejuvenation and new blooms of culture arose out of it, *the background and essential basis*, however, remaining much the same" (75–76, my emphasis). What he terms *Arya dharma* is thus located at the core of the nation, whereas Islam and Christianity are rendered extraneous to national culture.

Nehru describes the advent of Islam into the space of "India" in a chapter that is notably titled "New Problems." In contrast to Savarkar, Nehru emphasizes that Islam came to India as a religion several centuries before it came as a "political force" because of frequent trade and cultural contact with the Arab world, especially with Baghdad, which he lauds for being "the biggest intellectual center of the civilized world" in the eighth and ninth centuries. In a typical affirmation of "Indian tolerance," he claims that since "it was the old tradition of India to be tolerant to all faiths and forms of worship," Islam "had taken its place among the many religions of India without trouble or conflict" for over three hundred years. However, things changed with the repeated incursions from Afghanistan of Mahmud of Ghazni: "Above all, they brought Islam, for the first time, to the accompaniment of ruthless military conquest," which led to "powerful psychological reactions among the people" (229, 232, 236). Despite his obvious resistance to Islam as a proselytizing and conquering religion, Nehru goes on to outline how the "invaders" from the northwest were eventually "absorbed into India and [became] part of her life. Their dynasties became Indian dynasties and there was a *great deal of racial fusion by intermarriage*" (238). This process of naturalization culminates in the figure of the Mughal emperor Akbar. In a chapter titled "Babar and Akbar: The Process of Indianization," we are told that although Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, remained "a stranger to India," his grandson, Akbar, married a Rajput princess, making Akbar's son and successor Jehangir "half Mughal and half Rajput Hindu . . . thus *racially* this Turko-Mongol dynasty became far more Indian than Turk or Mongol" (259).

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The language of race here is reminiscent of Savarkar, but where Savarkar draws on biological conceptions of race (for the most part) to describe Hindus as a "race-jati," Nehru deploys the term "race" in a very loose and capacious sense to designate different cultural, linguistic, and religious entities. For example, once he sets up Aryans and Dravidians as the basic Indian races, he goes on to say: "In the ages that followed there came many *other races*: Iranians, Greeks, Parthian, Bactrians, Scythians, Huns, Turks (before Islam), early Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians; they came, made a difference, and were absorbed." Unlike Savarkar, who lumps together "Arabs, Persians, Pathans, Turks, Moguls" as the monolithic Muslim enemy, in Nehru's considerably more complex and nuanced account of history, it is "wrong and misleading to talk of a Moslem invasion of India. . . . There was a *Turkish* invasion (Mahmud's), and an *Afghan* invasion, and then a *Turco-Mongol* or Mughal invasion" (73, 43, 241). Significantly, each term in this formulation is designated as a "race"—for example, we are told that some of the subsequent rulers who came from Afghanistan (Qutb-ud-Din Aibak, Razia Sultana, and Iltutmish) were in fact "racially Turks" (238). Nehru's culturalist conception of race in these passages resonates with the use of the term in the discourse of race struggle that appeared in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as traced by Michel Foucault. Foucault notes that "although this discourse speaks of races . . . it is quite obvious that the term 'race' itself is not pinned to a stable biological meaning. And yet the word is not completely free-floating. Ultimately it designates a certain historico-political divide. . . . One might say—and this discourse does say—that two races exist whenever one writes the history of two groups which do not, at least to begin with, have the same language or, in many cases, the same religion."[42] Unlike Savarkar and his contemporaries in the Hindu Right, Nehru is not deploying an anatomicobiological notion of race to describe Hindus or Muslims as a race, but his conception of race does connote a historicopolitical divide between Hindus as the inhabitants of India and the various Muslim rulers who came from the northwest of the subcontinent. Although Nehru also differentiates among the Turks, the Mongols, and the Afghans as diverse "races," he views all of them as invaders and outsiders precisely because they are Muslim.[43] Of course, the key difference from Savarkar's account is that in Nehru's story, eventually, these "foreign" invaders become "Indianized" by means of a process of "racial fusion" and cultural admixture to the extent that they begin to look upon India as their home.

Accordingly, in *Discovery*, the Mughal and Afghan rulers no longer remain foreigners; they become part of the ensemble of the Indian nation such that the "Mughal dynasty became firmly established as *India's own*":

> The Mughals were *outsiders and strangers to India* and yet they fitted into the Indian structure with remarkable speed. Through choice or circumstances or both, the Afghan rulers and those who had come with them, merged into India. Their dynasties

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> became completely Indianized with their roots in India, *looking upon India as their homeland, and the rest of the world as foreign.* (261, 241, my emphasis)

While most earlier (and many present-day) nationalist accounts posit a homology between Mughal rule and British colonialism, Nehru emphasizes that unlike the British, who remained "outsiders, aliens and misfits in India," the Afghans and Mughals were absorbed into India and had no outside affiliations. Thus, Akbar and his descendants did not remain strangers in India (238).[44]

Although Nehru's and Savarkar's perspectives on Muslims and the history of Indian Islam are very different, they share the modernist assumption of an already existent, unified national entity—India or Hindustan—that has existed since antiquity and the concomitant fiction of a national people who are organically connected to the land. In both works, we see the production of the nation as a self-constituted organic whole. As Manu Goswami points out in her excellent account of late-nineteenth nationalist narratives:

> Works that regarded the Mughal Empire and by extension Muslims as foreign were formally similar to those that argued that long-run inhabitation had naturalized their status as fellow nationals. Both positions shared in common a historicist understanding of the liaison between territory and identity that rendered Hindus as the original, organic, core nationals. Within this schema, Muslims were regarded as the foreign body, an external element within the corporatist vision of an organic national whole, or at best belated nationals whose relationship to the imagined nation could only be figured as a problem.[45]

This notion of "Hindus" (in an expanded sense) as the core nationals and of Arya/Hindu *dharma* as the originary ethos of India marks the shared ground between Savarkar's account and Nehru's admittedly more sophisticated narrative of the Indian nation. However, while the Muslim remains an enduring stranger in Savarkar—indeed an infiltrator in more recent Hindu nationalist discourse—Muslims are eventually absorbed and become part of the ensemble of the Indian nation in Nehru's *Discovery*. But the fact of their late entry—or rather the late arrival of Islam into the (fictive and enduring) bounded whole of India—enables Nehru to set up a hierarchy of national subjects with Muslims established as minor subjects of the nation.

Accordingly, Nehru can, at best, call for tolerance and protection of minorities when it comes to present-day Muslims. Thus, he is willing to provide "the usual provisions for minority rights," such as those laid out by the League of Nations, including protection of religion, culture, and language for the individual and the group. But he also wonders what more Muslims can ask for as a minority: "It is difficult to conceive what greater protection could be given to any religious minority or group under any democratic system." He reminds his readers that "the whole history of India was witness to the toleration and even

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encouragement of minorities and of different racial groups. . . . We did not have to go abroad for ideas of religious and cultural toleration; these were inherent in Indian life" (382–83). Nehru repeatedly affirms the essential tolerance of "Indian" traditions, but tolerance is almost always conceptualized as Hindu tolerance toward religious minorities (especially Muslims).[46] As Wendy Brown has shown, tolerance typically expresses the extent to which one group, the "tolerant" (usually conceived as superior), may *withstand* the practices, behavior, or even the existence of another group, the "tolerated" (usually constituted as inferior and marginal).[47] Tolerance, in other words, is mainly granted by those in power who conform to the normative order to those who deviate from it. Thus, the heterosexual tolerates the homosexual; the dominant racial or ethnic group tolerates minority cultures or races; the Hindu tolerates the Muslim, Christian, or the Sikh—though the extent to which tolerance is proffered or withheld differs largely. In each instance, however, the "nonreciprocity" of tolerance discourse is effectively masked since the hegemonic group is typically constructed as universal and "secular," whereas minority groups are viewed as saturated by their religious and cultural identities.

Interestingly, at one point, Nehru does gesture toward a more reciprocal notion of tolerance when he writes, "Religious differences, as such, do not come in the way, for there is a great deal of mutual tolerance for them [in India]" (382). Here, Nehru invokes the idea of tolerance in a more idiomatic sense to connote a notion of mutual or reciprocal tolerance among diverse religious and ethnic groups as a mode of living together. However, the question remains: Can this conception of reciprocal tolerance suffice for the living together that Derrida calls for? Derrida proposes different, more ethical ways of relating to others—especially those who have been excluded from our ensembles—that go not only beyond a liberalist understanding of tolerance but also beyond any relationship of reciprocity, exchange, or mutuality. He suggests that a living together of peace and accord, which exceeds the compulsory tolerance of the juridical contract, can occur only when one opens one's self and one's "home" to the other—the stranger/foreigner who is not considered a natural or organic part of home—without subsuming the other into the self. In the final section, I return to Derrida's meditations on hospitality for thinking the living together of Hindus and Muslims in India, but I also ask: Can we rely on hospitality alone to manifest the living well together? Moreover, what might be some of the risks and pitfalls of Derridean hospitality?

Hospitality

Derrida calls for a fracturing openness with respect to the ensemble, but it is not merely enough to interrupt the totality of the whole; he also enjoins us to welcome the stranger unconditionally into our home: "This 'living together,' even where it is irreducible to the statutory or institutional (juridical, political, state-controlled) bond, opens another

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dimension to the same necessity—and that is why I have spoken of the other, of the stranger, of a hospitality to the wholly other who exceeds the statutory convention" ("Avowing," 15). Although Derrida does not elaborate on his thoughts on hospitality in this essay, which is more preoccupied with the question of avowing the impossible and forgiving the impossible, his late work offers many reflections on hospitality. Turning to the concept of hospitality, he deconstructs it from within in order to imbue it with a new significance.[48] He points out that hospitality in the "ordinary sense" is inextricably interwoven with a concept that has traditionally served as its antithesis—hostility—because it requires that the host—he who offers hospitality—must be master in his own home before he can receive the other as a friend or an honored guest.[49] The host authorizes who crosses the threshold by selecting, choosing, and filtering who may/may not pass through the door. He welcomes the other but on condition that the other respects his authority over his home. The other is welcome to the extent that he respects the *chez-soi*—the "being-at-home of my home"—that he adjusts to the order of the house, the language, the nation-state. Hospitality thus rests upon claims of property ownership and a reaffirmation of the host's mastery. Furthermore, this "despotic sovereignty" and the "virile mastery" of the host (who is above all male) is intrinsically related to ipseity—it is "nothing other than ipseity itself, the same of the selfsame," which is why the question of hospitality is also the question of ipseity; it has to do with how we relate to others—as our own or as strangers.[50] The law of identity or the "*being-oneself in one's own home*" thus becomes the very "condition of the gift and of hospitality."[51] Derrida thus locates a violent contradiction inherent in the very concept of hospitality: The host must be assured of his sovereignty over the space that he opens up to the other, which, he suggests, limits hospitality at its origin. It is this seemingly "aporetic paralysis" at the very threshold of hospitality that must be overcome; hence, hospitality can only take place beyond our pre-comprehension of hospitality. Accordingly, Derrida asks us to do the impossible—to put into practice a pure and unconditional hospitality that takes place beyond hospitality.

The absolute hospitality that Derrida calls for "presupposes a break with hospitality in the ordinary sense, with conditional hospitality, with the right to or pact of hospitality."[52] It requires that

> I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner (provided with a family name, with the social status of being a foreigner, etc.) but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I give place to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names.[53]

Thus, hospitality must not be restricted to the "foreigner"—who is the citizen of a country and endowed with a legal subjectivity—but it must be offered to all others including those we might think of as "barbarians," to whosoever turns up before any determination or

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any identification, "a human, animal, or divine creature."[54] Derrida diffuses and extends the very meaning of *étranger* beyond its traditional inscription in Greco-Roman and European discourses of hospitality to include the "wholly other," one who is not only beyond the conditional circles of language, family, or citizenship, but also beyond the "its other" of dialectics.[55] What is more, for such an absolute hospitality to take place, the host must become the hostage of the other prior to becoming the host; he must relinquish all claims to mastery and ownership in the instant he receives the other.[56]

The boundless hospitality Derrida calls for transgresses all the laws of hospitality as we know them since hospitality in this revised sense is not about debts, calculations, duties, or contractual obligations. In fact, he goes so far as to suggest that the experience of hospitality is coextensive with ethics itself: "Insofar as it has to do with the *ethos*, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, *the manner in which we relate to ourselves and others*, to others as our own or as foreigners, *ethics is hospitality*."[57] Hospitality thus has to do with the claims that the stranger has on us. It is crucial to Derrida's understanding of ethics—our responsibility toward the other—and is inseparable from his thinking of justice and politics.

Throughout, the stranger is understood as one who comes from elsewhere or one who lies beyond the "circumscribed field of *ethos* or ethics," especially in relation to Hegel's three instances: the family, bourgeois or civil society, and the nation-state.[58] Although the relevance and importance of Derrida's arguments about hospitality are fairly evident when thinking about exiles, immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers, what happens when we consider the question of how to relate to those who have been positioned as strangers *within* the ensemble of the nation by virtue of their ostensibly extraneous religious affiliations? In "Avowing—The Impossible," Derrida maintains that hospitality is also crucial for the living together of peace and accord: "One lives together, well then, *only with and as a stranger, a stranger 'at home* [*chez soi*]' in all the figures of the 'at home,' that there is 'living together' only there where the whole [*ensemble*] is neither formed nor closed" ("Avowing," 19, my emphasis). Derrida calls for a reversal of the formula—strangers as enemies—when he emphasizes the importance of living with the stranger, but what is crucial about this formulation is not just the idea of living *with* the stranger, but also living *as* a stranger at home, there where one claims to be at home with oneself, where one stakes ownership.[59] Derrida calls for a radical rethinking of our concepts of identity, residence, and above all, nationality—in its claims over a particular bounded territory. (As Penelope Deutscher reminds us, "A nation state is never properly itself, its territory is never its own," even as it may assert authority over a particular space.[60] This may take the form of literal colonization, as in the case of settler colonies, or it may entail the appropriation and demarcation of a territory in the name of a specific (often the majority) community whose members are designated as the core or representative national subjects.) In his call to live as a stranger at home, Derrida radically interrogates any idea of home that is premised on notions of territoriality, possession, and the prior claim of any one individual

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or group. To my mind, this is the most important aspect of Derrida's treatise on hospitality and living together and is critical for interrogating notions of autochthony and nativism. Derridean hospitality would enjoin those *who assert authority over a particular nation-space*—such as upper-caste Hindus who claim to be the primordial heirs of the Indian nation—to give up all claims of ownership and sovereignty and to welcome those who have been rendered as strangers without saying "I welcome you" or without seeking to fold the other into the self.[61]

However, the questions remain: Where does hospitality emanate from? Who can extend the gift of hospitality? If there is to be hospitality, as Derrida himself admits, there must be a home, "the own home that makes possible one's own hospitality."[62] And if the question of hospitality is intrinsically related to that of ipseity—whereby the being oneself in one's own home is the very condition of the gift of hospitality (as well as that which limits it at its origin)—then only those who are at home with themselves can welcome the stranger or the foreigner. The imperative to open up their home cannot be placed before those whose very identities are under threat of erasure—in other words, those who have been designated as strangers. At the very least, the host must be "at home" to be able to *give up* his claim on the home and to extend the gift of hospitality. Pointing to some of the risks and paradoxes built into Levinas's and Derrida's discussions of hospitality, Edith Wyschogrod notes that "autochthony persists while engaging in its own deterritorialization."[63] Absolute hospitality thus continues to be bound up with notions of power and agency even as it seeks to radically interrogate and overturn ideas of mastery, ownership, and possession of the home. Like Nehru, Derrida's emphasis seems to be on the (generous) host—he who welcomes (in Nehru's case it would be he who tolerates)—rather than the empowered stranger.

Indeed, one must also ask, does absolute hospitality go far enough in overturning the binaries of host and stranger, or does it risk naturalizing these identities by implicitly placing all power and agency on the host? Does an ethics of hospitality risk fixing the very categories of host and stranger that it sets out to dismantle? More specifically, by using the term "hospitality" to reflect on the relationship of Hindus to Muslims in India, are we in danger of further reifying the identities of Hindus as the primordial hosts and Muslims as the eternal guests/strangers? In my view, reversing the apparently transparent categories of host—the self-designated master of the nation—and stranger might be the more complicated and pressing task. The responsibility for creating a more just and peaceful world must not be limited to the givers of hospitality or those who have assumed the role of the master of the home or the nation.

Writing about immigrants in France, Mireille Rosello cites the story of a migrant worker from Abdelmayek Sayad's *L'immigration, ou, Les paradoxes de l'alterité*, who lived in a *foyer*, a worker's residence that precludes the possibility of dwelling as if one were at home because he can't invite his interviewer to partake of his hospitality. Rosello goes on to ask the important question of what it would take for the "postcolonial guest" to be "at

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home": "Being at home is being where you can not only eat and drink but also invite someone to eat, to drink, to chat. Being at home is being where you can be the host, where you can offer hospitality. . . . The migrant worker shows that the right to offer hospitality would construct his dwelling place as a home that he could, finally, appropriate."[64] Merely dwelling in a place does not amount to being "at home" in a place. Rosello suggests that to be at home, the stranger must be able to offer hospitality—"that is, not reciprocate, but lengthen the chain of possibly incommensurate hospitable gestures."[65] If hospitality has to do with the ethical claims that the stranger has on us, then, there must be room for the stranger *to lay claim* to the very home from which s/he has been excluded or rendered indeterminate.[66] Living well together cannot be contingent on the ethics of hospitality alone.

In the Indian social and political landscape, which has been shaped by the legacies of Partition and the creation of Pakistan as a homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent, what would it take for Muslims to appropriate the Indian nation-space as a home—and not just as their residence or habitation—and thereby to also claim the position of host?[67] Certainly, Muslims are not "postcolonial guests" in the sense that Rosello uses the term when talking about Maghrebian immigrants in France, but undoubtedly they have been positioned as strangers and unknown entities whose allegiances to the nation are constantly suspect, and require ritual performances of patriotism, especially after Partition. I argue that it is only when Muslims will be able to claim the place of the representative nationalist subject—or be one among other representative national subjects—and when they are not constantly obliged to prove their nationalist credentials, will they be able to appropriate their nation as a home. That is, only when the very categories of host and stranger, majority and minority are overturned—which an ethics of hospitality, however generous, does not enable—will we be able to manifest the living well together that Derrida calls for.

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72. Said, *Orientalism*, 207.

73. On the question of Derrida's ambivalence regarding the necessary courage required for him to speak in defense of the Palestinians, see Caroline Rooney, "Derrida and Said: Ships That Pass in the Night," in *Edward Said and the Literary, Social, and Political World*, ed. Ranjan Ghosh (London: Routledge, 2009), 45–46.

74. Jacques Derrida, "Interpretations at War: Kant, the Jew, the German," in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), 137.

75. Ibid., 138.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 78, 89.

79. I thank Akeel Bilgrami for his engagement with me on this point.

80. Jacques Derrida, "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of Religion and the Limits of Reason Alone," in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), 45.

81. Ibid., 91.

82. Muna Tulbah, "Jak Drida: Thaqafat 'al-Tafkik' takhtalif min balad ila akhar wa laysa kul naqid adabi muhayya' l'imtilakiha [Jacques Derrida: The Culture of "Deconstruction" Differs from One Country to Another and Not Every Literary Critic Is Ready to Acquire It]," *Al-Hayat*, March 3, 2000, 16.

83. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 72.

84. See Evyatar Friesel, "The Holocaust and the Birth of Israel," *Wiener Library Bulletin* 32, no. 49/50 (1979); Joseph Massad, "Palestinians and Jewish History: Recognition or Submission?" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30, no. 1 (2000): 52–67.

Beyond Tolerance and Hospitality: Muslims as Strangers and Minor Subjects in Hindu Nationalist and Indian Nationalist Discourse

This essay provides an elaboration of some of the arguments in my book, *Limiting Secularism: The Ethics of Coexistence in Indian Literature and Film* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). Many thanks to my father Tapishwar Kumar—the Nehruvian man par excellence—for his careful reading of this essay and for always being willing to think with me. I am grateful to Elisabeth Weber for generously sharing Derrida's essay with me and for her editorial suggestions. I am also indebted to Gil Anidjar for his instructive comments and questions. Claire Fox, Kathy Lavezzo, and Ajay Skaria provided many thoughtful questions and suggestions on earlier drafts of this paper. Many thanks, as well, to Amit Baishya and Murli Natrajan for some stimulating conversations on the intersections of race and religion in Hindu nationalist discourse.

1. Jacques Derrida, "Avowing—The Impossible: 'Returns,' Repentance, and Reconciliation," in this volume. Hereafter cited in text with page numbers.

2. Derrida claims there is no "how" in the sense of precepts and rules, but it must be invented by each one in every singular situation. He underscores the importance of avowing the unavowable and forgiving the unforgivable—often through returns to the proximate or distant past—as the

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very conditions of a new living together. He differentiates between two kinds of forgiveness: one that is dependent on and demands repentance, and the other, a pure forgiveness without expectation of confession or reconciliation. For more on the importance of avowing the impossible past of Partition, see Priya Kumar, *Limiting Secularism*, especially chapter 3, "Acts of Return: Literature and Post-Partition Memory."

3. Emile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society*, trans. Elizabeth Palmer (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1973), 293.

4. The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides us with the following meanings for stranger: (1) one who belongs to another country, a foreigner; chiefly (now exclusively), one who resides in or comes to a country to which he is a foreigner; an alien. (2) One who is not a native of, *or who has not long resided in*, a country, town, or place. Chiefly, a newcomer, one who has not yet become well acquainted with the place, or (cf. 4) *one who is not yet well known*. (3) A guest or visitor, in contradistinction to the members of the household. (Now chiefly with mixture of sense 4) (4) *An unknown person*; *a person whom one has not seen before; also in wider sense, a person with whom one is not yet well acquainted* (my emphasis). The *OED* indicates that definition 1—the notion of the stranger as a foreigner—is now somewhat rare, and that recent examples show a mixture of senses 2 and 4—the stranger as a newcomer or as the unknown one.

5. Often his translators provide qualifying footnotes explaining their choice of term. For example, in *Of Hospitality*, Rachel Bowlby explains her choice of "foreigner: because "it was more appropriate in most of the contexts" and notes that she would occasionally substitute "stranger" "where necessary or conventional," whereas Barry Stocker and Forbes Morlock in their translation of "Hostipitality" state that *étranger* has been translated variously as "stranger," "foreigner," or "foreign," "depending on the context." Gil Anidjar, in contrast, refers to use the term "stranger "in his translation of "Avowing—the Impossible" in this collection. See Rachel Bowlby, "Translator's Note," in Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), ix; Jacques Derrida, "Hostipitality," trans. Barry Stocker and Forbes Morlock, *Angelaki* 5, no. 3 (2000): 3–18, 16.

6. See Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 43.

7. Derrida, "Hostipitality," 14.

8. See Derrida, "Hostipitality," in *Angelaki*, 8, and "Hostipitality," trans. Gil Anidjar, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), 361. In *Of Hospitality*, in a somewhat contradictory manner, Derrida differentiates between *étranger* as foreigner and the "absolute other" where the *étranger* is one with whom one has reciprocal rights of hospitality in the form of a pact, whereas the absolute other does not have a name or a family name ("the social status of being a foreigner"), but hospitality is owed to this absolute, unknown other (25).

9. Zygmunt Bauman, "Modernity and Ambivalence," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1990), 148.

10. Ibid., 149, my emphasis.

11. Ibid., 150.

12. Derrida himself veers closer to Bauman's understanding of stranger when he explains the term *étranger* thus: If we had to give the term *étranger* a "determinate scope," a "normal usage"—especially where the context remains unspecified—"*étranger* is understood on the basis of the circumscribed field of *ethos* or ethics," especially in relation to Hegel's three instances: the family, bourgeois or civil society, and the state (or the nation-state) (*Of Hospitality*, 45). A similar understanding is also at work in the second part of Benveniste's formulation of *l'étranger*: "he

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who is outside the limits of the community, Lat. *peregrines*" (*Indo-European Language and Society,* 293).

13. The connection with an "outside" becomes apparent when we look at the etymology of both "stranger" and "foreigner." "Stranger/strange" derives from the Old French *estrangier*/ e*strange*, and from the Latin *extrne-us* where the *extr* connotes something external or outside. (The *OED* gives the meaning of "extraneous" as "of external origin; introduced or added from without.") "Foreigner" derives from the Old French *forain*, and from the Latin *for nus*, and the *OED* notes that the prefix "for-" occurs only in words adopted from French, and (like *extr*) represents an outside, an out. I am grateful to Jonathan Wilcox and Denise Filios for some useful discussions on these concepts and their etymology.

14. See Balmurli Natrajan's "Searching for a Progressive Hindu/ism: Battling Mussolini's Hindus, Hindutva, and Hubris," *Tikkun* magazine, September/October 2009, for an illuminating account of Hindu nationalists' fascination with fascism and their attempts to racialize Hindus: http://www.tikkun.org/article.php/sept_oct_09_natrajan.

15. Gyanendra Pandey, "The Civilized and the Barbarian," in *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*, ed. Gyanendra Pandey (New Delhi: Viking, 1993), 12.

16. For an insightful analysis of the politics of the Hindu Right, see Tapan Basu et al., eds., *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993).

17. V. D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* (1923; Bombay: Veer Savarkar Prakashan, 1989). Hereafter cited by page numbers parenthetically in the text.

18. Edwin Bryant, *The Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture: The Indo-Aryan Migration Debate* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 272.

19. On the two-century-old Aryan migration debate and the origins of Indo-Aryan-speaking peoples, see Bryant's *Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture*.

20. Etienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 22.

21. Manu Goswami, *Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

22. Ibid., 181.

23. Here, Savarkar seeks to correct Orientalist notions of caste as a fixed and unchanging system. He speaks in a pedagogical vein: "For the very castes, which you owing to your colossal failure to understand and view them in the right perspective, assert to have barred the common flow of blood into our race, have done so more truly and more effectively as regards the foreign blood than our own" (*Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* 85). He goes on to outline how "intermarriages between the chief four castes" [the varnas] resulted in the creation of many new castes and eventually a unified Hindu race (86).

24. See *Against Stigma: Studies in Caste, Race and Justice Since Durban,* ed. Balmurli Natrajan and Paul Greenough (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan Press, 2009) on racism and casteism as descent-based forms of discrimination.

25. This used to be the case until the Nazis differentiated between Jews and Arabs precisely along the lines of race and religion: "What had been for Ernest Renan virtually the self-same Semites (Jews and Arabs), at once race and religion, became for the Nazis highly differentiated groupings, differentiated in the very terms and deployments of race and religion." Thus, where the Nazis racialized and de-theologized the Jew—for example, in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler claimed that the Jews'

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"whole existence is based on one single great lie, to wit, that they are a religious community while actually they are a race"—they also deracialized Islam, which they seemed to have considered strictly a religion rather than a racial signifier. See Gil Anidjar, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), 6, 19, 109n20.

26. Anidjar, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, 6, 117–19.

27. Race also becomes a radically unstable category in Savarkar when he draws attention to the invention of race as a concept: "After all there is throughout this world so far as man is concerned but a single race—the human race kept alive by one common blood, the human blood. *All other talk is at best provisional, a makeshift and only relatively true. Nature is constantly trying to overthrow the artificial barriers you raise between race and race*. To try to prevent the commingling of blood is to build on sand. Sexual attraction has proved more powerful than all the commands of all the prophets put together. . . . Truly speaking all that any one of us can claim, all that history entitles one to claim, is that one has the blood of all mankind in one's veins. The fundamental unity of man from pole to pole is true, all else only relatively so" (*Hindutva*, 90).

28. In sharp contrast, Derrida states that living together would entail interrogating the insufficiency of the old couple of concepts: "*physis/nomos*, *physis/thesis*, nature/convention, biological life/law." One will never be able to think the living together, he claims, unless one "transports oneself *beyond everything* that is founded on this opposition of nature/culture." See "Avowing," 16–17.

29. This is a paradoxical claim since he begins with the assumption that the Vedic Aryans migrated to India and came as "newcomers."

30. Accordingly, Savarkar extends an invitation to the other: "Ye, who by race, by blood, by culture, by nationality, possess almost all the essentials of Hindutva and had been forcibly snatched out of our ancestral home by the hand of violence—ye, have only to render wholehearted love to our common Mother and recognize her not only as Fatherland (Pitribhu) but even as Holyland (punyabhu); and ye would be most welcome to the Hindu fold" (*Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* 115). Conversion becomes the means to reenter the Hindu fold for Muslims and Christians.

31. Cited in Gyanendra Pandey, "Which of Us Are Hindus?" in *Hindus and Others*, 239. Indeed, Golwalkar took Savarkar's efforts to constitute India as a Hindu nation even further; in 1939, he explicitly compared the RSS vision with fascism: "To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world *by purging the country of the Semitic races—the Jews*. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences, going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by." Cited in Natrajan, "Searching for a Progressive Hindu/ism," 1.

32. Cited in Bryant, *Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture*, 274.

33. As I have argued in *Limiting Secularism*, the dominant narratives of secular nationhood tend to construct Partition as the logical culmination of the Muslim separatist impulse. However, recent revisionist historical scholarship on the Partition suggests that Jinnah did not really want Pakistan—the separate nation—but held up the specter of Pakistan as a cleverly disguised tactical maneuver, a bargaining chip with which to extract specific concessions for Muslims from Nehru and Gandhi's Congress party. Indeed, as Aamir Mufti argues, Partition must be read as a development necessary to the discourse of Indian nationhood, "a turning of two thirds of the Muslims of India [the largest Muslim polity in the world at the time] into non-Indians" (Pakistanis) so that the remaining one-third could successfully be contained in the role of national minority. The Muslim separatist impulse in India, enunciated most explicitly by the Muslim League and Jinnah, must be

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understood primarily as a refusal to accept this ambivalently coded anomalous citizenship, a refusal to be cast in the excluded and cast-out position of minority. Such a fundamental rethinking of the very origins of the Indian nation-state is crucial for thinking coexistence in the present. It enables us to reconsider the demonized narrative of Muslim separatism as well as the persistent construction of the Indian Muslim as an undecidable figure, the stranger, whose loyalty is always suspect and must be ritually reaffirmed to quell nationalist anxieties. See Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Aamir Mufti, "Secularism and Minority," *Social Text* 14, no. 4 (1995): 75–96, see especially 86–87.

34. Anidjar, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, 20–21.

35. See Etienne Balibar, "Strangers as Enemies: Further Reflections on the Aporias of Transnational Citizenship": http://www.globalautonomy.ca/global1/article.jsp?index=RA_Balibar_Strangers.xml, and Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society,* 294.

36. Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 133.

37. Amit Baishya has usefully drawn attention to the literary dimension of the text by attending to its tropology—its use of the recurrent "concept-metaphor" of "life" for constructing the Indian nation—and the ways in which it functions as a mode of "literary self-making," which seeks to understand the past by bringing it in relation to Nehru's present (31–32). Although *Discovery of India* is not a fictional work, it also asks the reader to "suspend the referential illusion" that is crucial to the "historiographical effect." Thus, he proposes that we read it as a "literary non-fiction of the nation-form" (35). See "Conjuring the Nation-State: The Vicissitudes of 'Life' in *The Discovery of India*," *Postcolonial Studies* 12, no. 1 (2009): 29–46.

38. In his official account of the excavations carried out at Mohenjo-Daro between 1922 and 1927, Sir John Marshall writes: "Hitherto it has commonly been supposed that the pre-Aryan peoples of India were . . . black skinned, flat nosed barbarians. . . . Never for a moment was it imagined that five thousand years ago, before the Aryans were heard of, Panjab and Sindh . . . were enjoying an advanced and singularly uniform civilization of their own . . . even superior to that of contemporary Mesopotamia and Egypt" (cited in Bryant, *Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture,* 159). It is noteworthy that Nehru also cites Marshall in his chapter on the Indus Valley Civilization.

39. Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (1946; Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), 72. Hereafter cited by page numbers parenthetically in the text.

40. The question of whether the Indus Valley Civilization preceded, coexisted, or was coterminous with Vedic civilization continues to be a matter of immense debate. For a lucid account of proponents on both sides, see Bryant's *Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture*.

41. Nehru moves from hypothesis to assertion when he claims that Dravidians were the inhabitants of the Indus Valley Civilization. Since the script of the Indus Valley is yet to be decoded, it is very difficult to establish whether the inhabitants of the Indus Valley Civilization were Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, or Munda speakers.

42. Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–76* (New York: Picador, 1997), 77. Foucault sees this discourse of race struggle as a powerful form of counter-history—"a direct challenge to the history of sovereignty and kings—to Roman history" (71). He goes on to trace how this discourse of race-struggle is recoded in the nineteenth century in terms of a biological and medical understanding of races and "postevolutionist" notions such as natural selection and the survival of the fittest. He suggests that this is the point at which actual racism appears. Now the theme of a binary society divided into two warring groups or "races" is replaced by

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a society that is "biologically monist." It is threatened by a number of heterogeneous elements that are not essential to it—hence the idea that foreigners (*étrangers*) have infiltrated this society—and that the state must be the protector and the guarantor of integrity and the purity of the race (80–81). We see this discourse of racism at play in the discourse of the Hindu Right, which makes it permissible for Hindus to kill the Muslim as the paradigmatic figure of the infiltrator.

43. However, the figure of the Afghan is especially curious in *Discovery of India* because it troubles and interrupts Nehru's assumption of discrete races/cultures and a bounded and stable geopolitical entity called "India." Thus, while Mahmud of Ghazni's invasion of certain parts of north India is described as a "*foreign* Turkish invasion" and the Mughals are a "Turco-Mongol" dynasty who were (initially) "*outsiders and strangers*" to India, the Afghans are designated as a "border Indian group, hardly strangers to India" such that the period of their rule may well be termed the "Indo-Afghan period" (238, 241). Rather, they are an "Indo-Aryan race closely allied to the people of India" because their language, Pashto, "basically derived from Sanskrit" (238). Since "Aryans" and "Dravidians" are taken to be the proto-Indian "races," Afghans can be viewed as an "Indo-Aryan race," even if they are Muslim and other.

44. Of course, the paradox remains that Akbar was born in a place (Umerkot Fort, Sindh) that was very much part of the nationalist imagination of "India," yet he must "become" Indian through a process of racial fusion and synthesis. Nehru's account of Akbar undermines from within his previous emphasis on nativity as a significant marker of nationality—for example, his affirmation of those religious traditions that were born on the "soil of India" as more authentically Indian than Islam and Christianity.

45. Goswami, *Producing India*, 188.

46. This, of course, has been the dominant understanding of Indian secularism.

47. See Wendy Brown, "Reflections on Tolerance in the Age of Identity," in *Democracy and Vision: Sheldon Wolin and the Vicissitudes of the Political*, ed. Aryeh Botwinick and William E. Connolly (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), and Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

48. See, for example, "Hostipitality," *Angelaki; Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*; "Hostipitality," in *Acts of Religion*; and *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Ann Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999).

49. In fact, as Derrida points out, there is also a semantic and etymological link between hostis (as host) and hostis (as enemy) and hence between hospitality and hostility. See "Hostipitality," in *Angelaki*, 15.

50. Ibid., 14–15.

51. Ibid., 4.

52. Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 25.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid., 77.

55. "Hostipitality," in *Angelaki*, 8, and "Hostipitality," in *Acts of Religion*, 363–64.

56. See "Hostipitality" in *Acts of Religion* for an elaboration of the themes of holding oneself hostage and as the substitute of the other in the work of Levinas and Massignon.

57. Jacques Derrida, "On Cosmopolitanism," in *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London: Routledge, 2001), 16–17.

58. Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 45.

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59. On reversing the notion of the stranger as the enemy, see also Balibar's "Strangers as Enemies," 13.

60. Penelope Deutscher, "Hospitality, Perfectibility, Responsibility," in *Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction Engaged: The Sydney Seminars*, ed. Paul Patton and Terry Smith (Champaign: University of Illinois Press), 96.

61. In fact, the very act of saying "I welcome you" or "I invite you" becomes a way of insinuating that one is at home here, and hence of appropriating a place of ownership and mastery for oneself.

62. Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 53.

63. Edith Wyschogrod, "Autochthony and Welcome: Discourses of Exile in Levinas and Derrida," *Journal of Philosophy and Scripture* 1, no. 1 (2003): 36–42, 40.

64. Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), 17–18.

65. Ibid., 18.

66. In "It's My Home, Too: Minoritarian Claims on the Nation," I discuss the importance of Hindi films such as Mahesh Bhatt's *Zakhm*, Khalid Mohamed's *Fiza*, and Shyam Benegal's *Mammo*, which make a powerful case for Muslim claims on the Indian nation. See *Limiting Secularism*.

67. This is not to undervalue the everyday affects of home or ties to a place, but to mark the difference between the power to assert authority over a particular (nation-) space and the inability to do so. For more on the significance of what the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan terms "homely pleasures accumulated over time" and how they make up the homelike qualities of a particular place, see my essay "Karachi as Home and the Uncanny Homecoming of Muhajirs in Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*," *South Asian Review* 32, no. 3 (2011).

Rights, Respect, and the Political: Notes from a Conflict Zone

1. See, e.g., Catherine Zuckert, "The Politics of Derridean Deconstruction," *Polity* 23, no. 3 (1991): 335; Nancy Fraser, "The French Derrideans: Politicizing Deconstruction or Deconstructing the Political," in *Working through Derrida*, ed. Gary Madison (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 51; Richard Kearney, "Derrida's Ethical Re-Turn," in *Working through Derrida*, 28; Richard Beardsworth, *Derrida and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1996); Richard Bernstein, "Serious Play: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Derrida," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (1987): 93; Martin McQuillan, ed., *The Politics of Deconstruction* (London: Pluto Press, 2007); Nicholas Dungey, "(Re)Turning Derrida to Heidegger: Being with Others as Primordial Politics," *Polity* 33, no. 3 (2001): 455; A. J. P. Thompson, *Deconstruction and Democracy: Derrida's Politics of Friendship* (London: Continuum, 2005).

2. See Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991): 773. See also 780–90, where Scott discusses the authority of experience.

3. See, e.g., Derrida's take on the nature of the new international in Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), 90. Any overarching system will ultimately become totalitarian, and Derrida understands the aim of his project of deconstructive reading as to "*free oneself of totalitarianism as far as possible*," argue Derrida and Peggy Kamuf, "Like the Sound of the Sea Deep within a Shell: Paul de Man's War," *Critical Inquiry* 14, no. 3 (1988): 648 (emphasis added).

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